

THE WESLEYAN

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I Understand

by Jere House

My name is Sadie Burgess. I have sat on this same spot on the corner of Plum and Griffin every fair day for nineteen years. I sell flowers—violets, daisies, and any other small plants that I can get. I'm not very smart, not even bright, most people say, but I see a lot of life here and I understands what I see and hear. I've never had any of this new stuff—psychology, I think they calls it, but I understand what I see.

In any one day, I am as close to human beings as any one of these educated doctors. I see good folks and bad, and lots of times I see them what's tryin' to be exactly what they ain't. It's good for anybody's soul to see a young boy 'n girl crossin' a crowded street, not knowin' there's nobody else there—lots of times I see little scenes like this, and I understands 'em.

One day I was sittin' on my "warm spot" as I call it, and all day I notices this lonely lookin' man walkin' back and forth up and down the street. He don't seem to know where he is for sure, and I thinks to myself that this is the first time I see somethin' I don't understand. All day he walks by hisself, not lookin' at nobody, just mutterin' and moseyin' along. Finally, after I have spent all day watchin' this stranger, I decides it's time I finds out what he's doin', 'n if I can help him. I puts down the few posies I have left, and walk up to him. I looks deep down into his hurt-lookin', scared eyes, and then I understands.

I don't know how long I talked to pore Mr. Cason, but I think I helped him some. When he walked off from me that evening, I felt like that he, just like me, was beginning to understand.

I don't reckon nobody would have ever thought that I could think, but like I has told you, I understands what I see. Now, take this trolley that stops on this corner every half hour. The people that gets off and on that car never see me as a person, most of the time, just a machine that holds flowers out and asks them to buy 'em. The people that buy my flowers don't need no flowers, most of 'em don't anyhow. They just buys to help out "pore ole Sadie", as they calls me. I gets more out of just settin' and understandin' what I see than I gets from spendin' the little bit of money from these flowers.

I gets to ramblin' when I tell you about myself, but everything I say reminds me of more 'n more things.

Another pretty day I was settin' in "warm spot", and this sweet little kind-lookin girl that I takes to be about twenty years old, comes up to me and asks me where the bus station is, and just as I started to tellin' her, she just busted out a' cryin' as hard as she could, and I just looked at her and smiled, and said, "Sit down, Girlie, I understands."

Sadie Burgess will write no more of her story, for this appeared in small print on the back of the city newspaper today:

"Sadie Burgess: Found dead in her apartment on East Forty-Second Street early this morning. No living relatives. Body buried through kindness of anonymous friend. No foul play, dead from a heart attack.

Yes, Sadie is gone, and I am the anonymous friend. I found the unfinished paper in her grimy apartment after Sadie's body had been carried away. I just wanted to add my note to it, for I am one of the hundreds that old Sadie "helped to understand".

REFLECTION

Color is not color,
 Unless there shines some light.
 But is it, , sans reflection,
 Black or white?
 It matters not.
 I am not real
 Unless there shines on me,
 The light of your exquisite radiance,
 When you flee,
 All life from me doth drain.

Joan Shapiro

Ode to Freshmen

By Donnie Donaldson

*Roses are red
Violets are blue
I wanna go home
So do you!*

Do you get that sinking feeling when the sun comes up over yon golf course and you have to make the fifty-yard dash to breakfast? Do you dare to feel broken and downhearted during the day when some one of your twenty professors assigns you six novels in Arabic to be done in two large days plus three term papers? Do you sense that feeling of fatigue as you sit writing several books for tomorrow's assignments? Are you inclined to weaken your coffee at night with your tears of emotion? Do you find yourself reading the one letter you've received all year from the folks (I'd say things have been a little rushed at home) four times before breakfast with a quick runover before lunch? Tell me, comrade, do you just have that general all-over "Help, help, I'm lost" feeling? Admit it, my sister in the bond of suffering, thou art homesick!

Of course you realize you'll be able to snap out of this so-called "slump" in no time. (I mean even if it has been going on now for approximately thirteen weeks and four days—what's that a sign of?) You see by the means of observation that you are, shall we say, just a tad uncomfortable? I mean you have laughed in your life—you can remember that far back can't you? Well, anyway, the laughter, she just won't come now. You suddenly possess a very distinct dislike for your roommate (almost as bad as the one she possesses for you) you can't find a professor in the whole set-up who is interested in passing you, you have now spent all of April's allowance and you are working on May's for the noble cause of food to console at least your body if not your mind, and besides that, you have come to be just a small bit bitter about the fact that in the last thirty-eight days you have received two insurance premiums, one library card from Miss Carnes and a Sears and Roebuck catalog in the mail.

But one last word, freshman. Seriously, kids, if any part of this weird message applies to you, buck up and all that sort of stuff—you know—

*Roses are red
Violets are blue
I got over it
So will you!*

LIKE A GREY CAT

Out of the sea the fog came creeping,
 Crept 'cross the land with cat-like tread,
 Silenced the sounds of a world still sleeping,
 Muted and still, like the step of the dead.
 Only a night bird's lonely cry
 Welcomed the fog as it stole by.
 Soon the meadow and valley were covered,
 With grey mist that smothered each farmhouse and tree
 Still it rolled on, till at last it discovered
 A city that lay locked in dreams, silently.
 Only a night bird's lonely cry
 Welcomed the fog as it stole by.
 It parted, and fingers crept into each by-way,
 Malignant, till even the beckoning light,
 Of street lamps was shrouded, lining the highway,
 With baseless stars mistily filling the night.
 Only a night bird's lonely cry
 Welcomed the fog as it stole by.
 Then the cat paused, its long journey finished,
 And settling close to the dew spangled ground,
 Slept. In the stillness, far-off vague, diminished,
 The song of the bird held a lonelier sound.

Marian Mustoe

ODE TO THE WASTEBASKET

By Betty Moss

Symbol of the things done
 that which has been consumed.
 Remnants remain; they follow another
 path from the predecessors.
 In it are pages, unwanted.
 Out of it things desired—filed away,
 perhaps eaten, smoked, framed.
 Ours is pale green with a nondescript design
 at which I've not looked, just knowing it's there.
 Yours next door—is it dark and rusty?
 A pasteboard box. Metal and shiny?
 Or rough or smooth?
 What is your symbol of things done?

Jack & Jill

By Jean Thrasher

I Meness

The little boy wiggled his feet under the white sheet, but he couldn't see his toes like two moles burrowing up the blankets. It was dark. He couldn't play hunter and catch his toes like he sometimes did when he was sick. He couldn't see them now. Hunter was a silly game anyway. He always knew where his toes were all the time because they were part of him.

His eyes were open, but the black liquid coated his pupils. Funny to keep your eyes open at night when you can't see anything. He shuddered and hugged himself. He felt the smooth skin of his arms under his pajamas. He felt the smooth, cool sheet over his toes. Sighing his chest swelled and drew close, swelled again.

In his ears was the beating of his sighing and the pulse of his heart. This is me. This little tick like a clock or the pulse of a motor. He hugged the meness of himself and lay breathing the intoxication of legs and arms and ears and eyes. Then he pretended, although he knew he was merely pretending because he was old enough to know dreams from truth.

He thought of the geography of meness—the contours of muscles and skin, the tick of heart and the drifting, wavering dreams of mind. He was complete. His meness was the world. The dark didn't matter. He had his own sun and moon within his imagination.

He felt the surge of blood in his arms and legs grow stronger. He joyed in the regular ebb and flow. He pretended he was an island on the coast, and the tide washed him, grinding the sand finer and finer throwing shells up on the beach.

Then he sighed again and cried. The warm tears trickled down his nose and eddied around his chin. Why tears, why rain, why dark? he thought. His lungs ached with the hard sigh of fear and aloneness.

II Darkness

Darkness enclosed him. Blackness tickled in his throat and coated his eyes, but outside himself in the darkness was also a pulsing, the jumbled rhythm of complexity. It was like on a boat when you can't see the shore when you know it's there the long, thin line of continent.

Why dark? he thought. Why do the lights go out at night? Why does even the sun go out like the big light in the dining room when the power fails—flicker, flicker, night?

I hear the creak and whisper of it. I feel it on my face like a spider web you can't shake off, but my fingers can't touch it. It's as thin as light but heavier, heavier on my cheek, enclosing me, shutting me out. I'm here with myself and the night outside me. It won't push away. It won't go home and leave me to myself and day.

I can't sleep. I'm afraid to stop watching it, the black nothing. I must

watch. I mustn't let it inside me. I mustn't let it swallow the tiny sun within me.

I don't want to be alone in the dark. I don't want to cry and be sad. My daddy wouldn't want me to be alone in the dark.

III Thirst

Salty aloneness was on his mouth—the taste and sting of it.

"Daddy, I'm thirsty," he chanted the charm. His words echoed back hollow.

I'm thirsty, and my daddy wouldn't want me to be thirsty. He's a good man. He works six days a week for light and bread and water. He'll bring me a glass of water.

He waited for the footsteps, but he heard nothing but the ominous creak and whisper of darkness. I'll wait, he thought. I'll wait and be good.

"Daddy, I want a drink of water. I'm waiting for you." I know he'll come down.

He felt the cool liquid in his throat. He felt it smoothing, but it turned dust dry. He swallowed his thirst. I think of something else. Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of water. Jack fell down and broke his crown, and Jill came tumbling after. Jack and Jill fell down, and the water hid deep in the ground.

Why doesn't he come? Didn't he hear? Maybe he's asleep and he can't hear me.

"You just can't hear me, can you, Daddy?"

The blackness wipes away my words just like a blackboard cleans off the chalk. He can't hear . . . I'm afraid. Daddy wouldn't want me to be alone and thirsty. He wouldn't sleep and leave me here. He would never sleep when I need him.

I won't think about waiting for him. I'll play pretend. I'll play I'm a bird. I can outfly the night. Like all birds I can sing with the flock above in and feel my wings curving in the warm sun. I'm free to fly and fly and never be tired. Just flying . . . flying . . . wings in warmth.

IV Flight

I'm flying. I'm flying up high in a swing—over everything. My feet can almost touch the tipped sky, and the trees are green cylinders below me. I can stay here forever—never swing back—back down. They're screaming, my playmates, to see me swing so high. Look at me. Look at me. Why don't they look? Don't they see? Look up here I am. Maybe they don't want me swinging over their heads? I want to be with them. The ropes stretch; I'm falling. Swing back down. Did you see how high I was swinging?

What's wrong? Don't they see me? They're playing by the cool, trickling stream.

The girl has on a pink dress. Pink for girls, blue for boys. Come on. I won't swing anymore. We'll play. I'll forget about how high I was and how

I wanted to stay. Let's play statues. I'll swing you out and choose the best.

Round and round, ring around. I can't let go. I'm dizzy. Let's stop for a minute. Stop, stop. I don't want to play if you won't stop swinging me around and around. Oh, I'm swinging you. That's right, but I can't let go and it's getting dark. Don't stop. I don't want to stop playing. We'll play out the dark together. We won't mind. We'll play by this little stream and never be thirsty. Don't stop playing.

"Don't stop. We'll never be thirsty. I'm . . . won't be thirsty. . . . Daddy, Daddy, I want a glass of water."

V Daddies

The darkness eddied around him in slow circles. His eyes were open to the barren darkness, and his ears heard the echoing tick within his meness.

"Daddy." The night air sucked in his words and closed over them with only a tiny gulp of reverberation.

Maybe something happened to him. Maybe he's dead in the big room upstairs . . . No! My daddy wouldn't leave me to float in darkness. He was here a long time before I was born—before my senses turned in the ooze of beginning. He wouldn't die. He's up there and—just can't hear me. Those stairs have a trillion, billion steps. It's so very far upstairs.

I know my daddy is upstairs in this very house. What do people do when their houses have no upstairs? I wouldn't like to live in a one story house. Then my daddy would have to stay in the attic or on the roof somewhere. I guess some people don't even know they have a daddy. They just forgot to care. It's so dirty in the corners of attics where they push him, but I bet there are some who wouldn't know what a daddy looked like if they saw one.

I'm supposed to look like my daddy, but I'm not sure. I don't have long legs like he does or big shoulders for carrying little boys upstairs. I've seen some people that look like their daddies. Some are short like them, and some have their daddies' eyes, but they don't look out of them quite the same way. Some people have mouths like their daddies', but they don't talk the same. I wonder if anyone ever looks just like his daddy. Maybe they never can.

I remember one boy. His daddy wasn't nice and kind looking at all, but the little boy was nice looking. When he got bigger he stuck pins in children's hands on the playground and passed them the salt instead of the sugar. I heard that his daddy died. People say he killed him with a kiss. Isn't that strange? There must have been something though because the boy went and hanged himself. I heard people say that his face turned real black. I guess there aren't many people who would kill their daddies, but there are an awful lot of one story houses.

"Daddy, I'm thirsty and I can't climb the stairs. Please come down and get me . . . Daddy!"

VI Stairs

"Daddy, please carry me up the stairs. They're so very steep. It's so very

far upstairs."

He's up there I know, but he just can't hear me. It's so very far. I have to crawl up on my hands and knees. The steps are so slippery, too—slippery and worn hollow by so many knees going up them.

He has to carry me to the top. It's so very far. It seems farther every time. I'm always falling down them. It hurts. It feels funny, too. I don't know whether to laugh or cry. Sometimes I do both. I try to laugh because it's so silly falling downstairs once you get up them.

When I'm finished crying I call for him to carry me up again, but he never will. He's a kind man. He makes me come up part the way myself before he will help me. He calls it learning. Daddy says that someday I'll learn to climb them all the way myself, but my legs aren't long like his. Now I have to come up crawling. Maybe someday I'll be straight and tall like him, and I won't have to come up on my knees.

Maybe I'll learn not to fall down, too. He says even big people fall down stairs. He says it's much worse for big people because they sometimes get afraid. That's why so many people live in one story houses—they're afraid.

VII Jack and Jill

"Daddy, I'm thirsty."

I'll go up and see him. I know he doesn't want me to be thirsty. He's waiting for me. I can't reach the light. I'll have to go up in the dark.

"Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of water."

The steps are slippery. I have so far to go. My side aches. The light—I can just see a seam of light holding up the stairs. Maybe if I climb half the way, he'll come and get me.

"Jack and Jill went up the hill."

It's lighter now. I can see the top. I've never seen the top by myself before. I can't go on. My legs won't carry me. They must. Wake up, legs. Don't you see the top?

"Daddy, I'm coming up and I'm thirsty. Jack and Jill went up."

My daddy's sitting in the stinging light. He's resting. It's the seventh day.

"Daddy, I came to see you. I climbed the stairs. I called and called but you didn't hear."

"I heard."

"Why didn't you come?"

"Because I heard the song of meness and the tinkling dream of bird-wings. Then I knew you were big enough to come up by yourself. I knew you would come if you really wanted to."

He gave me water, and I drank. His hand was on my head.

"Blessed are those who do hunger and thirst."

"What does that mean?"

"It means there's always life for those who are willing to live for it."

Jack and Jill went up the hill. Jack and Jill went up the hill. The rhyme chanted in my feet, in myself, as I went back downstairs to bed.

I RECALL

I recall . . .

A million stars that lit the sky
And danced around the moon—
And through the trees, played by the breeze
A gentle, summer tune.

I recall . . .

The rippling sound of dancing waves
As from a lake nearby,
And from a bird, a sleepy note
That rose up like a sigh.

I recall . . .

That like two shadows in the night,
We stood there, you and I,
Afraid that words would break the spell
And that the dream would die.

I recall . . .

The roughness of your jacket as
It rubbed against my face—
The way you held me in your arms—
Your gentle, warm embrace.

I recall . . .

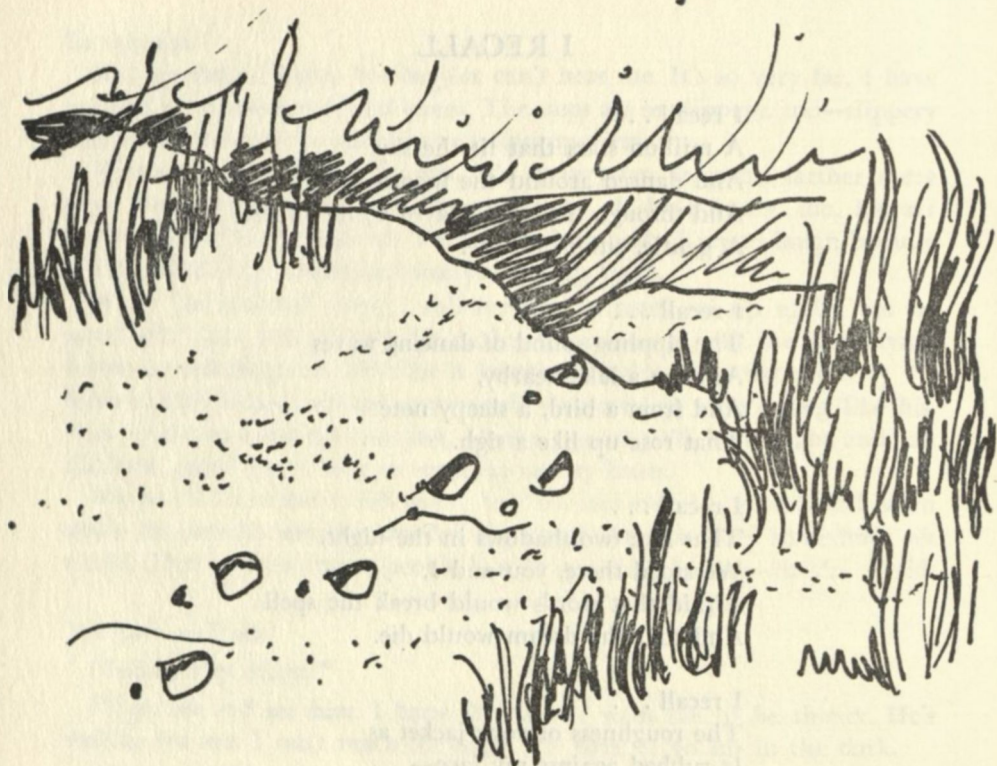
How my heart like a bird on wing
Soared high with happiness
When our lips met and sweetly clung
In tender breathlessness.

I recall . . .

That from the distance, came a tune,
The last dance of the night,
And how before we turned to leave
You smiled and held me tight.

I recall . . .

That though that night was long ago,
And though we two have part,
I hold the memory of that kiss
Still dear within my heart.
And, I recall.



Sand Song

By Jean Thrasher

The green-white sea foam sucks at the sharp depression made by a high heel in the sand. The water silkenly covers the outline and magnifies it until every pressed grain glistens. Then the edges crumble—folding back. The brittle sand crystals flow into the languid curves left by retreating water fingers.

Only these unfeeling bits know—only they hold the secret of the pressure of a high heel. Only the waves know the melody singing in the white, bubbly caps—it is a part of them.

The water breaks in a line of joyful frenzy, and the drops gather and rush back—a sliding sheet of glass—to well again in the blue-green sea.

Hidden Books

By Patsy Ann Davison

Time: A June morning, 1953

Place: A New York office building

Characters:

Mr. Randolph Randy Skyler—editor of *Inspiration*, an idealistic, romantic magazine designed to lift the middle-class group out of the humdrum reality of their everyday life; a tall good-looking young man of twenty-four.

Miss Carolyn Winder—literary receptionist; a frilly, pretty young woman of about twenty-two.

Miss Martha Henderton—the secretary; an attractive, though somewhat reserved appearing young woman of twenty-four.

Mr. Nosall—the janitor; spry for his sixty years; a sweet looking man with a definite twinkle in his eyes.

Setting: The stage is divided by a partition—to the left is the inner office of the editor; to the right is the outer office in which are books neatly placed between two dainty book ends and balanced on the other end of the desk by a stack of papers and a red rose standing tall in a slender glass holder. The secretary's desk contains a typewriter surrounded by neatly piled magazines and books. Mr. Skyler and Miss Henderton are seated at their respective desks working busily. The clock indicates the hour of nine.

Miss Winder: (*dashing artistically to her desk*) Good morning, good morning darling.

Miss Henderton: (*looking up from her work*) Oh, good morning. (*Glances at clock*)

Miss Winder: (*taking out her compact*) You are always so early. I am sure that Randy is so impressed that you are interested in your work. Is he in his office?

Henderton: I haven't seen Mr. Skyler this morning, but perhaps he arrived before I did.

Winder: Or, Randy is always a half hour late. (*She laughs as inner door opens.*) Oh, good morning, Mr. Skyler. I was just telling Miss Henderton that you were probably here already working on the June issue of the *Inspiration*.

Mr. Skyler: (*entering outer office*) Good morning, Miss Winder . . . Miss Henderton. Yes, I've been reading over some material. Come into my office a moment, Miss Winder; I would like your opinion on a new story.

Winder: (*musically*) Of course, Mr. Skyler. (*Walks into the other office ahead of Mr. Skyler*)

Skyler: (*pausing at the door*) Oh, by the way, Miss Henderton, have you finished typing the feature poem onto the layout sheet?

Henderton: Almost, Mr. Skyler; it is lovely. It has the style of Shel . . .

Winder: (*in a beckoning tone*) Is this the story on your desk, Mr. Skyler?

Skyler: Oh, yes . . . bring the poem into my office when you finish, Miss Henderton. (*exits into inner office, closing door behind him*)

Winder: (*looking up from her copy and speaking cautiously*) Is this the story you liked so much?

Skyler: Yes, it has such inspirational ideas. I can just picture the housewife, labouring over her chores and yet contemplating in her mind these beautiful thoughts. It has such an excellent choice of wording, such airy grace—almost poetical. And yet its basic idea is very deep and stimulating. What do you think, Miss Winder?

Winder: Oh, yes it is just heavenly. Can't you see some dear little housewife becoming inspired by this story? The words are so . . . so thrilling. It is just like poetry. But the idea is so stimulating.

Skyler: Well, I'm glad to have your reaction to the story. Yes, as you so cleverly put it, it is very stimulating . . . (*inner door opens*) Come in Miss Henderton.

Henderton: (*approaching slowly*) I have the poem typed, Mr. Skyler. It certainly is beautiful—such depth of feeling. It reminds me of passages from Hardy—the appreciation of the weird, gloomy side of nature,

Skyler: Why—why yes, Miss Henderton. I had no idea that you—that is to say . . .

Winder: Oh, Mr. Skyler, have you seen the new writer who has an appointment with you? I have seen reviews of some of his work, and the critics all say he is just wonderful.

Henderton: I believe you are speaking of Mr. Harlo. He called a few moments ago and asked that you meet him for lunch, Mr. Skyler. Since you were going to the printer's this morning and didn't have anything scheduled for noon, I told him that you would meet him at twelve at the club. You are anxious to talk with him, aren't you? He left his number in case you had other plans.

Skyler: Yes, yes, I am most anxious to meet Mr. Harlo. We are considering adding him to our staff. Thank you, Miss Henderton.

Winder: Appointment for lunch? You certainly are efficient, Martha.

Skyler: Yes, well I must leave now and see the printer. If I have any calls, I'll be back within an hour. (*exits*)

Henderton and Winder: Goodbye, Mr. Skyler.

Henderton: (*walking into outer office followed by Miss Winder*) If everything goes according to plan the June issue should be ready for the printers next week. (*sits down*) These lay outs are working out fine.

Winder: The business end of it just doesn't interest me. I guess it's because I'm the literary type. (*picking up a magazine*) These stories are lovely,

but I seriously doubt that the common person appreciates them.

Henderton: Maybe if they read them over and over, they get at least one thought.

Winder: (*laughing*) Oh I doubt it. People are so simple when it comes to true art. (*the phone rings*) Good morning, Mr. Skyler's office. Oh, yes, Mr. Skyler; those layouts? Just a moment. Martha, Mr. Skyler needs those first page layouts to show to the printer. Are they ready?

Henderton: Tell Mr. Skyler I'll have them over there within fifteen minutes. I am just finishing them.

Winder: We'll have them at the printer's office in about fifteen minutes, Mr. Skyler. Miss Henderton hasn't finished them yet. All right, sir, Goodbye. (*hangs up, gets out compact and applies make-up while humming a little tune; glances over now and then at Miss Henderton, who is busily working, then paces the floor and looks with unusual interest at the pictures on the wall*)

Henderton: (*with a flourishing gesture of her hand*) Well, that is done. (*holding up papers*) I think that will be satisfactory.

Winder: (*rushing over to Miss Henderton's desk*) You have done your share. Now, I will take them over to Mr. Skyler. You are so busy and besides, I was going to take my morning break. (*taking up the papers*) I'll be back in a little while, darling. (*rushes out*)

Henderton: (*imitating Miss Winder*) Thank you, Miss Winder. Thank you so very much, darling. (*Stares at the still vibrating door for a moment and then looks cautiously around, then reaches into a bottom drawer and pulls forth a folio crammed with papers . . . just then the outer door opens*)

Henderton: Oh! Good morning, Mr. Nosall (*looks at him but busily jams papers back into the drawer*)

Nosall: Good morning—er, I didn't interrupt something important, did I?

Henderton: Oh, no, no. I just finished some layouts and haven't anything important to do until they are approved.

Nosall: (*pushing broom about the office*) It looks as if someone had an important mission the way Miss Winder was flying down the hall. I don't believe she even noticed me coming up the hall. But then she always seems to be in a hurry. Usually I see her hurrying to lunch. I used to think she probably did a lot of shopping, but it seems that if she makes it the corner by the time Mr. Skyler comes along in the car, she has a chance of being taken to lunch. That is, of course, if he doesn't have an appointment, but then I guess she knows all about the appointments and such.

Henderton (*wistfully*) Yes, I suppose she does.

Nosall: (*emptying trash can by Miss Henderton's desk and reading each paper before allowing it to go into the big box*) You certainly take a lot of dictation—off that machine in the corner. Those days of secre-

taries taking letters right from the boss are over I guess. It did make it rather nice—the boss and the secretary sort of worked on correspondence together . . . got to know each other better than they do nowadays.

Henderton: I guess those “good old days” are gone forever, Mr. Nosall. Efficiency seems to be the rule of the day.

Nosall: (*looking at paper he has taken from trash can*) Now, this is very pretty . . . “The mountains loomed in the distance—majestic, commanding and even domineering. She sensed immediately that these giants of nature represented Robert. It was only natural, because he had grown up in these mountains and they had been his only teachers.”

Henderton: (*looking up quickly*) Oh, that story. It . . . it is; we rejected it. I mean . . . well, it had some good passages but the plot . . . the plot wasn't very well constructed.

Nosall: Is that so? Too bad. Seems as if I've read other passages about mountains. Last Monday, I believe it was. Something about the forces of nature. Sounded pretty good to me, but then you literary folks are the best judges. (*walks over to Miss Winder's desk*)

(*Outer door opens and Miss Winder enters like a gush of cold air.*)

Winder: Well, I'm back . . . Mr. Nosall, how many times have I told you to leave my desk alone. Just empty the trash, but don't you dare touch my desk.

Nosall: All right, Miss Winder. I was only trying to do my job—nothing else. I just thought I'd straighten things a little — I didn't mean any harm. (*walks briskly as he is able toward the inner office door*) I guess I'll sweep Mr. Skyler's office . . . (*closes door behind him*)

Henderton: You shouldn't be so harsh with the old man, Carolyn. He is so nice and doesn't mean to disturb things — he is just interested.

Winder: Interested — nothing. Most janitors work at night but not Mr. Nosall. He does his work in the daytime, so he can talk to people. And they let him, just because he has worked here for “so many years” (*wipes away an imaginary tear*) and is so old.

Henderton: Perhaps Mr. Skyler will let you keep your more important papers in the vault, when you go out for your morning break. (*returns to her work*)

Winder: (*opens mouth to say something, hears outer door open, grabs one of her classical books; then looks up to see Mr. Skyler enter*) Hello, Mr. Skyler.

Skyler: Hello, I got through with the printer earlier than I expected. We didn't have to make a single change in the layouts. They were excellent, Miss Henderton. (*walks into inner office and shuts the door*)

Henderton: Thank you, Mr. Skyler.

Nosall (*from one corner of the room*) Good morning Mr. Skyler.

Skyler: Good morning, Mr. Nosall. You are on this floor earlier than usual, aren't you?

Nosall: Well, yes. People are busy today, so I skipped some offices until later. How is the *Inspiration* coming along this month? You must be gonna have a good issue, if you can afford to reject such a good story.

Skyler: Oh, we are coming along fine, Mr. Nosall. But what do you mean—reject a good story?

Nosall: Oh, well, I just mean what I thought was a good story. I've been reading manuscripts for years, but this one seems different. (*reaches into back pocket and draws forth a bunch of papers*) Here are some passages I've collected. I've been saving them and maybe someday I can fit them all together. Here—do you want to see them? (*hands the crumpled papers to Mr. Skyler*)

Skyler: (*read aloud*) "The mountains loomed in the distance . . . (*mumbles to himself as he reads further*) Why, this is wonderful, but I've never read it before. Where did you find it?

Nosall: Out of Miss Henderton's waste paper basket. I've been collecting it for weeks now. I just save what seems to be the best copies—there are so many alike except for a few words here and there. That sure is a funny way for her to type up a story for your magazine. She is such a good typist—hardly ever makes mistakes. I guess that's the reason you all rejected this story is that it is so long—much longer than the stories you use.

Skyler: (*half aloud*) Revised copies . . . a long story about nature . . . what was it she said . . . "the appreciation of the weird, gloomy side of nature . . . mountains." Why, Mr. Nosall, Miss Henderton is writing a book!

Nosall: You know, it's funny what a difference there is in the books people read. I say it's all a matter of taste and everybody has a right to read what he likes. Now Miss Henderton reads those "classical books", I guess you call them, during her lunch hour. Miss Winder reads mystery books. She was so upset when I returned one to her that she dropped in her hurry to lunch. She must not have liked that one.

Skyler: You say Miss Winder reads mystery books?

Nosall: Oh, well, so do I, sometimes. I read all kinds of books. You know . . .

Skyler: (*glancing at watch*) You'll have to excuse me, Mr. Nosall. I have a luncheon appointment . . . I'll see you later. Thank you, Mr. Nosall . . . thank you very much. (*exits*)

Nosall: Thank you? Oh, you're welcome, Mr. Skyler.

(*Mr. Skyler closes door behind him, and Mr. Nosall calmly starts to take papers one by one out of the waste paper basket*)

Skyler: Miss Henderton . . .

Henderton: (*looking up with surprised pleasure*) Yes, sir.

Skyler: Miss Henderson . . . that is . . . well, there is to be a lecture . . . a literary lecture tomorrow night. (*stops and stares*)

Henderton: Yes, Mr. Skyler?

Skyler: Oh, . . . yes. I thought perhaps you might like to go. Of course if you have . . .

Winder: Mr. Skyler, I . . .

Skyler: (*still looking at Miss Henderson and not realizing what he is saying*) Quiet, Miss Winder.

Henderton: Yes, I would like very much to go.

Skyler: Fine, fine . . . well, I'm late now for my luncheon appointment . . . Goodbye. (*rushes out of door*)

(*Miss Winder and Miss Henderson both stare at door, one with an amazed look and the other with a blissful smile.*)

Winder: (*filppantly*) Why he didn't even say what time the lecture was. Poor Randy is confused.

(*Mr. Nosall has entered as Mr. Skyler left and now walks to outer door, turns and winks at Miss Henderson. Miss Winder looks at Miss Henderson only to see her return the wink. Mr. Nosall exits.*)

Winder: Now, what was that all about?

Miss Henderson: (*dreamily*) Oh, I don't know. He is such a nice man . . . so interested, don't you think?

Curtain

SPRING FEVER

I think I've got spring fever,
I'm lazy all the while,
And I've got so much homework
Stacked up there in a pile.
I've got a research paper,
And a Spanish lesson too,
And I should catch up on my trig,
Oh! What am I to do?
I'll guess I'll just get busy
And try to get it done,
Then soon I will be able
To go out and have some fun.

Gail Milligan

A Letter Home

February, 1954

Dear Mother,

The beautiful Japanese magnolia are blooming everywhere. They remind me of the two big trees in our garden. And I remember that you love this flower.

I believe that Japan is still cold or rather Feb. is the coldest month in the year. I hope and believe you are all right and as well as I am. Just more several month until we can meet each other again. Please don't work too hard and don't worry about me. My life in America was always peaceful and joyful all through the two years. The word I want to leave Wesleyan is "Thank you everybody!!" I don't know anything else to say. I know there are deep and warm prayers of you behind all my happiness. So, I want to say "Thank you Mother!" to you too.

I met so many nice people in America. Most of them are in school and some of them are out of the school. I had been in school 14 years in Japan but I didn't have a real friend. (I mean, a friend who I can love, respect, and trust.) I have now. Don't you think it is wonderful to have good friends here, far from Japan? Japan and America are so close together to me.

Two years is not long enough to study. I am still struggling with making one good sound on piano and I still mix up the pronunciation of "R" and "L". I believe that you want me to study not only from text book but something more big too. The greatest thing I learned in two years is the kindness. I shall never forget the kindnesses which so many people have shown to me in this country. When I, a little foreigner in the big-country, was always scared what is going to happen next, some friends would pop in my room and say, "Do you know where bathroom is?"

"Lunch is going to be served at 1:00 today."

"Come on to my room and listen to the radio."

They were really good help to me at that time. Some other friends, frankly saying I didn't know their names at that time, invited me way down to Miami, Florida. Teachers never forget to pay a special attention to me. (Never could I sleep in class!) Some teachers hesitated to call my peculiar name, but they helped by study too. I cried once. It was not I was homesick, not because I got mad, and not for sadness. I was surprised by thoughtfulness and kindness of a teacher and a friend.

I haven't had any trouble with food in this country. On the contrary, I got sick after I ate Japanese food last summer. I went to the Japanese dinner at Miss Johnson's with some friends. It was a very good dinner

and I was just thrilled. But, next day my stomach was kind of up-set. I though I ate too much rich food in hot time, but everybody laughed at me.

I told you that I still mess up the pronunciation but I forgot Japanese too. Not really forgot, of course, I remember. I just can't speak easily . . . Last fall Mr. Imaishi (you know my English teacher in Hiroshima Girls' School) came to see me. It was so nice to see him straight from Hiroshima. I wanted to ask him so many things and to talk to him. Do you know what I said to him?

"Hello . . . I mean . . . How do you do? . . . Yes, . . . No . . . How is Mr.——Mrs.——Miss——?"

That is all and all in English. I was thinking in Japanese but when my thought became word they were all English. I must have been funny to Mr. Imaishi and American people. I thought it was pitiful. Don't you? But Mother, don't worry about that; I will practice on the long way to home this summer.

I can't wait to see you. I want to fly to Hiroshima right now. But, it is so sad to leave this country and leave from such a nice people.

I guess I had better go to bed.

Please take good care of yourself.

Love,

Tomoko

MY LOVE

I tried so very hard, my dear,
To find a way to say
Just how I love and cherish you
Each hour of every day.
But though a lot of little things
Keep running through my mind,
Away to tell you how I feel
Is awfully hard to find
For could I tell the beauty of
A star up in the sky,
Unless the star should be the one
That's shared by you and I?
And like our star, the love and dreams
That to my heart are near
Have beauty just because they're shared
Between us two, my dear.

Pauline Mann

Violets

By Bettie Willson

Virginia stepped out into the cool twilight and let the flood of office workers swirl around her; calling to one another, laughing, talking, being gay. She stood with her blonde head lifted, her gloved hands clasping the small envelope bag tightly to her waist, oblivious to the sounds of traffic. Her body was numb with fatigue and her lovely mouth was tight. She was trying to decide what to do about dinner. Should she buy two fresh eggs for a quarter and have a dime left to use for "mad" money, or should she catch the subway, have no dinner, and not have to walk those ten blocks home? She decided to eat.

Automatically, she turned to the left, and started up the crowded sidewalk, walking swiftly despite the pencil slim skirt she wore. She walked like a woman who knew how to wear clothes that suited her good body and lovely face. As she reached the corner of Forty Second Street, she was faintly aware that a young man had turned to watch her, and it neither pleased or displeased her. She thought briefly of that young man, and then something else drove itself into her mind and her mouth got tight again.

Mr. Ware had offered her the job today. He had called her into the office, from her cubby-hole of a desk, and offered her the job. She had not been surprised. She tried to remember how he looked now, but all she could think of was how quiet and calm his voice had sounded when he asked her to come to Europe with him and his mother next summer as his private secretary. That was when she got the idea. Or, had it been in the back of her mind all along? After all, Justin Ware was fairly young to be the president of such a respected firm. He was a widower and a perfect gentleman. And he *was* attractive.

She was stopped short, as if by a physical blow, and lifted her head. *Violets*. She could smell them. She turned, and saw them, then, through the blur of color which was traffic. Slowly, she made her way to the small, outdoor market where bunches of early spring violets lay in rows upon an upturned orange crate. For a moment, she stood looking down at them, seeing the dampness and softness of their petals and smelling the clean, sharp odor of earth about them. She thought of Jud. He had said she was like violets. Sitting on the work bench in his small greenhouse, he had laughed at her over the top of the tiny tree he was pruning and said, "You're violets, honey. You're not orchids or gardenias or any exotic thing that must be kept in a hot house. You're beautiful and you grow wild." After that, he had called her Vi. None else had called her that but Jud. They had fallen in love.

Hearing a voice at her elbow, she turned to find a bald, old man smiling up at her. He smelled of garlic.

"Would the young lady like some violets?" he asked, and his voice rasped. "Only fifteen cents a bunch."

"No," Virginia said, and she took a step away from him. Then, she thought of the eggs, and she turned back. "I'd like two fresh eggs, please."

The little man's eyebrows raised in astonishment and he leered up at her. The garlic smell about him made Virginia sick. He went away and came back with a small brown paper bag. As he handed the eggs to her, he smiled once more and Virginia noticed that his teeth were black.

"Twenty-five cents," he said shortly.

She handed him the money and stepped out onto the pavement. The eggs felt hard and cold through the stiff paper bag, and the thought of having to eat them repulsed her.

Suddenly, she was angry. It swelled through her like fire; her temples pounded with it. She clenched her teeth. The clip of her heels on the pavement made an angry sound. Her hand knotted into a tight fist, and she said aloud through her clenched teeth, "Someday—someday I'll have money. I'll have money and a car and clothes and everything that goes with them. I won't have to be poor. I *won't* be poor!"

"I can get him," she thought. "I can marry Justin Ware without half trying. And then, I can have everything I want. I can travel and be somebody. I'll not have to pinch pennies anymore."

She glanced up suddenly, and the anger went out of her in a rush. She saw a young girl, flushed and happy with love, step off the trolley and ran toward a young man whose face lit up at the sight of her. They clasped hands, looking into one another's eyes, and were swallowed up by the crowd.

A coldness lay in the pit of Virginia's stomach as she walked on. It hung in her heart. Her body ached with it. She was lonely. In the midst of this milling, teeming mass of humanity, she was alone. She was alone and she wanted Jud. She wanted fiercely to see him, bending over a bed of flowers, the trowel held confidently in his tanned hands. She wanted to see the laughter in his warm eyes and hear his voice. And she could hear it. She heard it as clearly as if she were still standing before him, stiff and indignant, surprised that he had taken the news of her departure so calmly.

"Well, Vi," he had said, and his voice was casual and unhurried as though she had just told him that she was going to visit friends for a few days instead of going to New York to get a job. "Well, Vi, if that's what you want to do, go ahead. But, if you should change your mind, I'll be right here."

He had come to the station to see her off, although she had not expected it. He had not changed from his worn army fatigues, and there were potted plants in the back of his delivery truck. He'd never want anything more than those flowers. The only thing he loved was growing things. He loved to work on his knees in the rich, dark earth, planting seedlings and watching them grow. And, he'd never be rich but, oh—she loved him!

She knew then, as surely as she knew the sun and the wind and the rain were Jud's, that she was his, too, and she had to go home. She didn't feel tired, anymore. She smiled at the driver of a ten ton truck as it moved slowly past her on the corner, and he almost drove it into a lamp post. She waved to the cop on the beat and he smiled and tipped his hat as she went by. At the corner of her street, old Katie was selling spring flowers and their scent hung on the air like a cloud. Virginia stooped, inhaling the intoxicating odor of fresh violets and, with her last dime, she bought a bunch and smiled at Katie and went on down the street.

ETERNITY

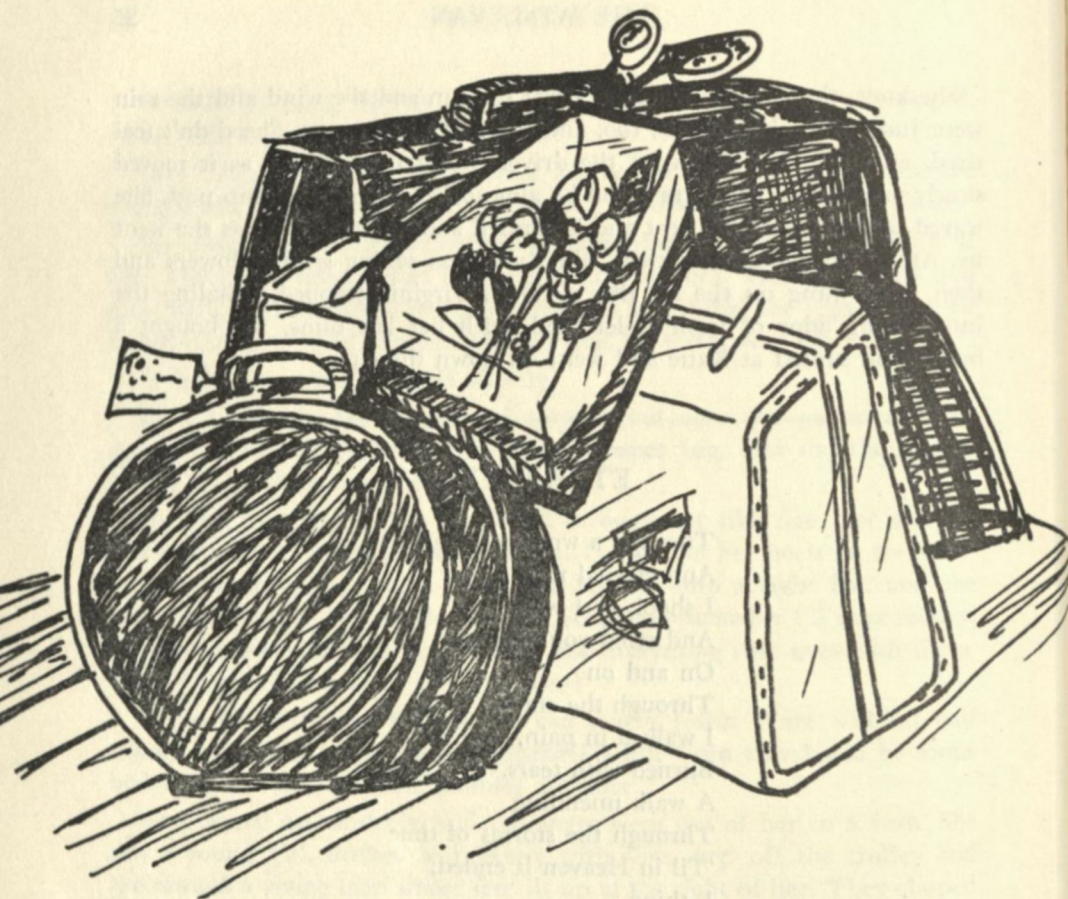
Through a world of thunder
And eternal rain
I shook as I walked
And cried your name.
On and on
Through the endless years
I walked in pain,
Burned with tears.
A walk unending
Through the storms of time
'Til in Heaven it ended;
I, thine.

Phyllis Wall

FLORIDA SUMMER

Grey sand,
Burnt brown grass, and beyond
Shade green of palms and southern pine.
Above, the sun-sword, unsheathed, shines,
Heat,
Slips into slim scabbard of white clouds,
Cool,
Then shines again, with furious fire.
Summer,
Sun,
Heat,
Hell-hot.

Joan Shapiro



Yellow Roses

By *Pauline Mann*

No one would ever have called Nancy Davis pretty, but she was definitely not plain when you considered it. She was tall with long straight limbs, a full red mouth, and brown hair with a red-gold tint, that turned up at the ends but drooped when it rained.

At twenty-seven she was a good stenographer with a prominent Washington firm. She was from a small Connecticut town where her father had owned the general store. She'd gone off to college for two years and then come to work at Brown, Burtch, and Walker, Attorneys at Law. At first she'd dated quite a lot. There was the young architect she'd dated for about three months. He'd seemed quite interested, and she'd given him

a beautiful set of golf clubs for Christmas. Then two months later he'd eloped with a little blonde from Baltimore. Then there was the professor and later a real estate salesman. As time went by, however, Nancy went out less and less, but she talked about Ted more and more.

None of the girls at the boarding house had ever met Ted, but they knew all about him. Each time Nancy went off for a weekend, it was to visit Ted. And she was always full of exciting tales of where they'd been and what they'd done. Ted never came to Washington to visit Nancy because, as she explained, he was with a big contracting company and was always on the go. Nancy didn't have a picture of Ted either, but from what she said, the girls gathered that he was tall, brunette and quite good-looking. And judging from the gifts she always brought back from her visits, they decided he had a nice sized bank account. The strangest thing about Nancy's romance was that she never mentioned marriage or even an engagement; and when the girls quizzed her, she was always very vague.

* * *

For the past three years, Nancy hadn't taken a real vacation. Her weekend trips had been all. But now it was going to be different—she was going to the coast for two glorious weeks at a resort hotel right on the beach with boating, swimming, dining, dancing, and all the wonderful things that went with it.

So the second week in June, Nancy packed all the new play clothes she'd purchased and the black lace dinner gown—that had really been an extravagance, but nothing was too good for her vacation—and caught the south-bound train.

Hotel Sands was all the folder had said and more. It was big, luxurious, and exciting. Her room was on the second floor—beach side—and she had a grand view of miles of silver white sand and blue, lace-fringed ocean. Nancy had never seen so much water in all her life. She was fascinated by the way the sand rolled back from the water into mounds called dunes and with the strange brown plants that grew only on their hot, white sand.

By her third day there, Nancy had collected a small mountain of assorted sea shells, and a lobster complexion. But she was a dauntless soul, and so the afternoon found her stretched out on the big gypsy colored beach towel letting the cool waves lick at her toes and then rush shyly back to their borders only to slip back with the next breaker.

"Hello, Nancy," said a masculine voice, and Nancy rolled over to stare up into the laughing eyes of a tall, dark haired young man.

"Me?" Nancy said staring blankly at the man who had called her by name.

"Of course, you," he said and sat down in the sand beside her. She continued to stare blankly. "Why Nancy Davis," he was laughing at her now. "I do believe you don't recognize me. Ted Griffin's the name. Does that help?"

"Oh! Yes. Yes of course. How stupid of me." Try as she may though, Nancy could not ever remember seeing the man who was sitting beside her and who called himself Ted Griffin. But broad, bronze, shoulders didn't happen to her often.

"Well, that's better. How long have you been here? I just checked in this morning. Sort of a bonus vacation before we get shipped off to Cuba."

"Oh? You're going to Cuba?"

"Yeah. The government down there thinks they need some new bridges, and our company got the contract. That's the trouble with being an engineer. Never know where you'll be next." He reached out, stopped a runaway beach ball and threw it back to the little girl who was chasing it.

As the afternoon wore on, Nancy became more and more puzzled. Nowhere could she remember ever having met Ted and yet he talked as if he'd known her all his life. He asked questions about her family, and whether or not her father still had the only general store in town. He asked if she liked working for Brown, Burch and Walker, and he asked if her cousin Sue ever married Dave.

Finally he jumped up and pulled her to her feet. "How about a swim before we dress for dinner?" he asked.

Nancy didn't swim well and she wasn't sure she should have dinner with Ted, but she didn't protest.

* * *

Dressing for dinner that night, she went over the strange affair. Anyone, she decided, could have gotten her name from the register and guessed about her father since she'd used her home address and the town *was* small. But how could he have known about B. B. and Walker, or Sue marrying Dave? She was wondering about this, when the door bell rang and a bell-boy handed her a corsage box—yellow roses! with a card from Ted. It was too much that a stranger should pick her favorite flowers. A coincidence was possible but not probable.

She met Ted in the dining room. "I hope you don't mind," he said after they sat down, "but I took the liberty of ordering. You used to like your steak medium rare and served with a baked potato. Hope you haven't changed your mind."

That did it. "I *must* know him," Nancy thought. "It will come to me—meanwhile—well, meanwhile it's too good to worry about, so I'll just enjoy it."

The next day they drove to the point and went fishing. Nancy caught a flounder and two mackerel and decided she'd always had a knack for fishing.

On Sunday they took the all day deep sea cruise and that night he kissed her.

The rest of the time flew. They swam, took long walks, and went dancing. One day they rented a sail-boat and took a picnic lunch to make a day of it.

Before she realized it, the two weeks were gone. Ted was leaving early in the morning and she had to catch an afternoon train.

"I can't give you my address," he told her, "'cause I don't know exactly where I'll be, but I'll write you, and when I get back, I might get to Washington." And then—he was gone.

Nancy still hadn't remembered Ted, which was very silly she decided, but she hit upon an idea. He'd probably used his home address when he registered at the hotel and that might be the clue she needed.

She packed her bags and threw away most of the sea shells she'd collected. Then she picked up the faded yellow roses. "I'll keep them," she decided and put them in their box on top of her luggage.

At the desk she asked the clerk about Ted's address.

"Ted Griffin?" he said and checked the register. "Sorry ma'am, but we don't have anyone listed with that name."

"Oh?" Nancy couldn't believe her ears. "Well, perhaps you can tell me the name of the gentleman who was in 210 next to me?"

"I'm sorry, Miss Davis, but 210's vacant. You must have been mistaken."

"Thank you," Nancy turned away. She hadn't been mistaken! Ted *had* been there, she *knew* he had. She couldn't have imagined it, could she? She glanced down, and there on top of her suitcase was the plastic box with the faded yellow roses.

Pauline Mann

EPIGRAMS

By Jere House

A penny saved will put in a higher income bracket.

Never put off 'til tomorrow that which you can put off indefinitely.

One today is worth two tomorrows, especially if you have an exam tomorrow.

They tell us that "Trouble springs from idleness", but who minds a little trouble?

Early to bed and early to rise,

Makes you your roommate's despised.

We've all heard, "It is better to give than receive", but some folks just believe in it when they're on the receiving end.

